

**ABBREVIATED REMARKS TO THE DACOWITS 1998 SPRING CONFERENCE, on
SUNDAY, 26 APRIL**

Chairman Bilby, members. -- Thank you for allowing me to address the DACOWITS this morning. I want to honor your 5-minute time constraint, so I've abbreviated my written statement, and will paraphrase in part.

At the outset, I want you to know I stand firmly with you and agree with your indignation over injustices women face in our culture, -- and I honor your earnest interest in our nation's safety and military readiness. Yet, the point of my remarks is to urge you to question a presupposition that seems to underlie the work of DACOWITS, -- that there are no innate or God-given distinctions to be made between the sexes with regard to roles in the armed forces.

I know you want to give advice [to the Secretary of Defense] that is balanced by wisdom and truth. Please, do not neglect a source of wisdom and truth that has proper place in military heritage, -- one that claims to supersede all others. That Truth is revealed by God, Himself, -- in the Holy Scriptures. Neither God, nor the word of God, the Bible, are strange realities to American military heritage. From the days of General Washington's presidency, the words "so help me God" acknowledge our dependence on God even to be loyal to our oath.

Jefferson's memorial in nearby Washington, bears his 1781 standard of fair warning related to national security. [He reminds us that "God, who gave us life, gave us liberty." And asks, "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath?"] -- It concludes: "Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Neither Jefferson nor I can impel you or anyone to believe his proposition. Perhaps you already do.

Today, I want simply to urge the DACOWITS to reflect deeply on whether advancing women as combatants is good for our nation because it comports with God's good pleasure and purpose for woman, -- or for man.

St. John Chrysostom, greatest preacher of the ancient church, patriarch of Constantinople in 397 AD, himself the son of a military officer, by the way, still revered as a man of the word of God, said startling words which are relevant: (Quote, in part) "Woman was not made for this, O man, to be prostituted as common. O you subverters of all decency, who [use men as if they were women, and] lead out women to war, as if they were men! This is the work of the devil, to subvert and confound all things, to overlap the boundaries that have been appointed from the beginning, and remove those which God has set to nature." (End quote)

The central assertion of my remarks is this: In fact scripture (that is, God) NEVER comprehends woman as warrior. It is a unique calling to man. Biblical manhood is shamed when he shrinks from his calling.

As positive counterpoint to Chrysostom's harsh admonition, Psalm 33 contains words about reality to ancient Israel, but which address ultimate matters of personal and national security:

Beginning at verse 8:

"Let all the earth fear the LORD;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
For He spoke, and it was done:
He commanded, and it stood fast.

The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations:
He frustrates the plans of the peoples.
The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD
The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.
The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men;
From His dwelling place He looks out on
All the inhabitants of the earth,
He who fashions the hearts of them all,
He who understands all their works.

The king is not saved by a mighty army;
A warrior is not delivered by great strength;
A horse is a false hope of victory;
Nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength.

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,
On those who hope for His lovingkindness,
To deliver their soul from death,
And to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD;
He is our help and our shield.
For our heart rejoices in Him,
Because we trust in His holy name.

Let Thy lovingkindness, O LORD, Be upon us,
According as we have hoped in Thee."

Our nation's safety lies within the providence of God. Our national motto is "In God We Trust." If such words have become merely a vain, superstitious shibboleth, -- then Jefferson's warning has stinging relevance. God is merciful and patient--and that's part of the good news.-- But God is also righteous and just. That's good news too, for some; but not for any who persist in opposing Him. Please, -- do not neglect to learn and consider the Creator's intentions for manhood and womanhood as you try to identify just and proper policies toward women, -- yet recommend using women as warriors.

Thank you for the privilege of addressing you. I pray for the integrity of your work. I've genuine respect and affection for you, and I'm concerned about you, and our country, -- whether we will choose to be a godly nation.

Robert H. Miller, CAPT, USN ret.